

London Oil Journal Predicts Attack On Saudi Oil Fields

The following are excerpts from a London-based journal, Arabia and the Gulf, of May 9, predicting the possibility of an Israeli attack, backed by U.S. forces on Saudi Arabia's oil fields:

The message is clear to Washington. Saudi supplies must be secured, preferably by means of a stable and sympathetic regime in Riyadh prepared to cooperate to the fullest extent.

There is already a Saudi nightmare, born of her central position on the stage of the world energy crisis. This sees all recent developments in the Red Sea area — the independence movements, and Soviet involvement in the Horn of Africa, pressures on Sudan, the Yemeni connection, as an orchestrated strategy which can only raise the temperature. One renewed suspicion is that Israel is waiting for the first opportunity to strike at Saudi Arabia and neutralize her military capability. There were suggestions years ago from the Ford Administration in the wake of the oil embargo, that the U.S. could encourage such a strike, if not intervene directly herself. Contingency plans for the seizure of oil wells on the peninsula were hinted at,

while American troops conducted exercises against unnamed desert kingdoms.

In November last year, Israeli Chief of Staff Mordechai Gur declared that Saudi military potential was not to be treated lightly. Besides being a direct threat to Israel, he said, these resources could be channelled to the main confrontation states. There was even the possibility of Arab states obtaining nuclear weapons, and Israel would do her best to pre-empt that. Such arguments would be available to the Israelis in the event of a surprise attack on Saudi Arabia. Analysts in Riyadh further suggest that the U.S. would step in to prevent a full-scale war and as "saviour" of the oil wells, use leverage to install a sympathetic Saudi leadership and perhaps some form of defense treaty.

Amid a welter of more or less plausible hypotheses, the eyes of the world are increasingly on Riyadh. Also, it would seem, the ears. In recent months communications between the capital and Saudi embassies worldwide have been subject to intensive electronic surveillance and disruption. Technical consultants advised the use of satellites for the greatest security, and King Khalid late last year personally ordered two at any price.

Central to the threat is the "two-faced" nature of the U.S. policy toward Israel. On one hand, an unending series of little "nuisance" crises in U.S.-Israeli relations since Carter took office has created an atmosphere of tension between the two countries, the latest incident being reports that the U.S. intends to throttle down its arms shipments to Israel. The goal of this managed crisis is to set up Israel, under certain circumstances, to strike "independently" as a breakaway ally — for which the U.S. could refuse responsibility.

But ironically — in explicitly contradictory style — Carter is moving behind the scenes to draw Israel into the NATO framework. A West German diplomat said this week that certain U.S. circles are seeking to bring Israel into NATO, although powerful opposition to that policy exists in the U.S.: itself and almost overwhelming hostility in Western Europe, which does not want to involve itself in Middle East military questions. However, a spokesman for Senator Jacob Javits hinted yesterday that NATO and Israel might draw closer to halt

"terrorist actions."

"This might happen, but not through formal NATO channels," the aide to Javits said. "It will be through channels of communications through several capitals, between Paris, London, and Washington. Terrorist sabotage of the oil fields has been a subject of discussion for a long time, and the talk may arise again of contingency operations to secure oil. Remember, there are thousands of Americans in Saudi Arabia, in all sorts of capacities, and they could be useful under such circumstances."

Last week Javits asked the State Department to say which countries were responsible for international terrorism, and State responded by targeting Iraq, Libya, Somalia and Peoples' Yemen — setting up those four pro-socialist countries for Israel-NATO hit squads in reprisal for "blind terrorism" already under the control of Interpol via such agents as Carlos. Today, the *New York Times* slyly reported that "communist guerrillas" infiltrated into Saudi Arabia were probably responsible for the oil field sabotage.